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1859th

MEETING: 4 DECEMBER 1975 UN/SA COLLECTION

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1859th MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 4 December 1975, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. Ivor RICHARD (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Costa Rica, France, Guyana, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Mauritania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1859)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The situation in the Middle East:
 - (a) Letter dated 3 December 1975 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/11892);
 - (b) Letter dated 3 December 1975 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/11893)

The meeting was called to order at 4.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East:

- (a) Letter dated 3 December 1975 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/11892);
- (b) Letter dated 3 December 1975 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/11893)

1. The PRESIDENT: Letters have been addressed to the President of the Security Council by the representatives of Lebanon, of Egypt and of the Syrian Arab Republic in which they request to be invited, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, to participate in the discussion of the question inscribed on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice and in conformity with

Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, I propose, therefore, if there is no objection, to invite the representatives just mentioned to participate in the Council's discussion, without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Ghorra (Lebanon) and Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic) took seats at the Council table.

2. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council has before it a letter dated 3 December 1975 from the representative of Egypt, which is inscribed on the agenda, in which he requests the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the debate.

3. In the course of the informal consultations that have taken place prior to this meeting, the representatives of Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, the United Republic of Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania have put forward the same proposal. I have been asked by those members of the Council to record that this proposal is not being put forward under rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, but, if it is adopted by the Council, the invitation to the PLO to participate in the debate will confer on it the same rights of participation as are conferred when a Member State is invited to participate under rule 37.

4. I call on the representative of France on a point of order.

5. Mr. de GUIRINGAUD (France) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, am I to understand from what you have just stated that the representatives of the PLO would not be invited under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure?

6. The PRESIDENT: That is so.

7. Mr. de GUIRINGAUD (France) (*interpretation from French*): In his letter addressed to you requesting an urgent meeting of the Security Council, the representative of Egypt also asked that the representatives of the PLO be invited to participate in this debate.

8. In view of the fact that the Israeli attacks which gave rise to the request for a meeting of the Council were directed at Palestinian refugee camps on Leba-

nese territory, my delegation considers that our work could not but be assisted by any information that might be provided by representatives of the PLO.

9. We categorically condemn the Israeli bombardments, as in general we condemn all acts of violence, and we believe that before we adopt a resolution on the question before us, at the end of the debate, it would be useful to hear the testimony and information of all the interested parties. We therefore believe that the representative of the PLO should be invited to participate in the debate. However, in the present circumstances and within the specific context of the complaints before us, it is my delegation's view that this invitation can be extended only on the basis of rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, which provides for the invitation of any person regarded as qualified to supply information.

10. In fact, the only persons who have so far been heard by the Council outside the context of rule 39 have been representatives of Member or non-Member States of the United Nations. Since the formula envisaged for hearing the representatives of the PLO is different from that laid down in rule 39, my delegation will, to its regret, be unable to associate itself with the decision that it is proposed the Council should take,

11. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the procedures agreed upon during our prior consultations, I shall put the present proposal to the vote. Before doing so, however, I shall call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote before the voting.

12. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): Mr. President, this unfortunate occasion has the one merit of providing me with the opportunity to express the great pleasure of the United States that you have acceded to the most important post of President of the Security Council at this very critical time. You will know of the utmost confidence which the United States delegation and, I am sure, each of the other delegations members of the Council have in your judiciousness and your commitment to orderly processes in the Council.

13. The United States delegation has insisted upon a vote on the issue of inviting the PLO appear before the Security Council. As a matter of principle we shall vote against the PLO being invited to appear.

14. We have witnessed a concerted attempt to disregard the rules of procedure and to accord to the PLO a role greater even than that which over the years the Council has granted to observer Government, and a role greater by far than has in more recent times been granted to the spokesmen of legitimate national liberation movements invited here under rule 39.

15. The United States is not prepared to agree to an *ad hoc* departure from the rules of procedure tailored to meet the asserted needs of the PLO. What is more important, my Government is not prepared to acquiesce in an action which will undermine the negotiating process, which is the only process that can lead to peace. For the representatives of the PLO have repeatedly, and as recently as the day before yesterday, told the General Assembly of their disdain for systematic negotiation. They have openly declared their hostility—indeed their contempt—for the work of the Council. They categorically rejected Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which for years has served as the only agreed basis for serious negotiation. And now we find the PLO citing actions taken in the General Assembly and the Security Council as the basis for still further erosion of the negotiating process.

16. For those fundamental reasons we are totally opposed to inviting the PLO. To do so will disserve the search for peace in the Middle East.

17. The noblest and most fundamental aim of the Security Council is to achieve peace and security. In the case of the Middle East, my Government is dedicated to active leadership in the pursuit of that goal. My Government has long maintained that the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people must be reflected in the arrangements that will bring peace and security to the Middle East. The effort which has been made to flout the procedures of the Council and to disregard entirely the sensitivities of the people of the State of Israel can only complicate the search for peace.

18. We urge all who share the hope for a just peace in the Middle East to withhold their support from this egregious attempt to use this body to deal with an amorphous terrorist organization as though it were a concrete entity with the attributes of a sovereign Government. The United States will vote "No".

19. Mr. VINCI (Italy): On 2 December 1975 Israeli aircraft struck Lebanese villages as well as Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, leaving a large number of victims, including women and children. Such action, which has been described as "preventive", meets with the same firm condemnation that the Italian Government has expressed in the past in similar deplorable cases.

20. Since I have the floor, I wish to convey at once our sincere sympathy, deep sorrow and human solidarity to the families of all those who have been the victims of the air raids—that is to say, Lebanese and Palestinian civilians killed on Lebanese territory in circumstances for which there can be no justification.

21. Once again we have been confronted with an act of violence and I want to reiterate here, on behalf of my Government, our condemnation of any act of

violence by whomever it is undertaken and wherever it takes place.

22. Following the air raids and in accordance with their rights as State Members of the Organization, two countries have asked for the opening of a debate on the issue of the attacks. At the same time, the representative of Egypt has requested that the PLO be permitted to participate in this debate, as you have just announced to the Council, Mr. President. We consider that request relevant in the sense that there is no doubt in our mind that the Palestinians and their representatives, in present circumstances, should be enabled to express their feelings and to tell us whatever they deem necessary concerning the case we are considering. Moreover, we are certainly interested in hearing whatever information they can give to the Council, thus helping us in examining the matter falling within our competence.

23. In this connexion, I want to make it very clear that we are indeed in favour of acceding to the request of the representative of Egypt that would afford an opportunity to the representative of the PLO to express his views on this tragic occurrence. However, after very careful examination of the Charter, the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and relevant precedents, and taking into account the principles on which the Organization is based, we have come to the conclusion that there is no other way that this can and should be done than under the clear provisions of rule 39.

24. Unfortunately, in our view, some members of the Council feel differently and deem it inadvisable to meet the request of the representative of Egypt under rule 39, a course which is supported by well-established practice. We are in fact faced with a motion requesting the participation of the PLO in the present debate on terms which are totally innovative with regard to such long practice. If that proposal were to be accepted, I fear it would create a precedent which might have unforeseeable consequences. In fact, to our mind this raises serious doubts and reservations as to its acceptability and its conformity with the provisions of the Charter, the provisional rules of procedure and the spirit of the Organization.

25. I should like to elaborate on this issue so that the reasons for our doubts and reservations may be properly recorded. First of all, no one can fail to take for granted that so far the Organization is an organization of sovereign States. The rights, duties, privileges and responsibilities set and conceived within the United Nations are linked to the very essence of statehood. Whatever feelings, consideration or sympathy we may have for a given organization, whenever some form of relationship is being established between that organization and the United Nations, we must accept the fact that there is an inherent difference between it and a sovereign State, to the extent that it lacks statehood. I would go so

far as to say that we can see some difference between the present discussion and the debate planned for January on the whole Middle East question, including the Palestinian problem, since politically speaking—not legally, I must make that clear, but politically speaking—it is hard to deny that the Palestinians represent one of the main parties concerned. On this point, without prejudging our position at that time, I wish to recall that Italy recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to a national identity and to a homeland. Moreover, many points of law can be referred to, and I am sure you are aware, Mr. President, that, being the representative of a country which has a long tradition in the shaping of the concept of the rule of law, I am rather keen on that subject. I shall, however, refrain from developing this point and will raise only one basic issue.

26. Should we grant the PLO the same rights, in this connexion, as those given to a State Member of the United Nations? Would that not raise in this case quite serious legal and political questions about possible interference with the sovereign rights of a State Member of the United Nations, whatever the intentions may be? I am, of course, referring now to Lebanon, to the extent that it is the territory of that country that has been hit by the raids. In other words, we have in this case one main party concerned. We cannot have two as long as the Articles of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure stand as at present. We believe, in other words, that Lebanon is the only subject of international law which is entitled to make its point, to present its claim, in response to the Israeli act of infringement of its national sovereignty.

27. On our side, we, as Members of the United Nations, have the duty, the individual and collective responsibility, to defend respect for the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure as they now stand. In our view, it is incongruous and incompatible with the very essence of international law that two different entities—to use very simple words—the Lebanese State and the PLO, should be granted the same right to act in the international sphere, namely, within the Council, with regard to the same complaint and in connexion with a clear act of violation of territorial integrity. That, in our view, would set a very dangerous example, and I wonder how many State Members of the United Nations would claim that the Council can indeed go beyond its powers and prerogatives by allowing such a radical change, which can certainly not be described as procedural inasmuch as it raises a very substantive matter of crucial importance for world order; a problem, to my mind, which goes much beyond the specific case under consideration. It is for that reason that we are not in a position to support such a proposal.

28. Mr. SAITO (Japan): It is the considered view of the Government of Japan that no solution of the Middle East problem can be reached without the

participation of the PLO in any efforts to achieve a settlement. The PLO represents the Palestinians, who are one of the major parties concerned in the problem. My delegation therefore takes the position that the PLO should be invited to take part when the Security Council conducts its deliberations on the Middle East problem, including the Palestinian question, next January.

29. As regards the question before the Council today, namely, the deplorable Israeli attack on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in which serious casualties, to our great sorrow, were suffered by the Palestinians, my delegation considers that the PLO should be allowed to make its statement on that attack in the Council. Rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure is, in our view, applicable to the present case. We find precedents for extending invitations under that rule to individuals representing various organizations, including liberation organizations. My delegation would give its full support to a request under rule 39 for the participation of the PLO in the debate of the Council.

30. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq): My delegation finds it most unfortunate that the representative of the United States has found it expedient to take this opportunity to launch yet another display of an exercise in propaganda, using the Security Council for the benefit of the mass media of information of the United States of America. He does not seem to be aware of the fact that we are gathered here because of a complaint resulting from a most savage terrorist attack, not by the PLO but by a State Member of the United Nations which the representative of the United States saw fit to defend here today. If there has been an act of terrorism, it is the one that is the reason for our meeting here today, and it came from the other side.

31. It has been asked why this request for the participation of the PLO was not presented and is not being presented under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. I shall read out the wording of rule 39:

"The Security Council may invite members of the Secretariat or other persons, whom it considers competent for the purpose, to supply it with information or to give other assistance in examining matters within its competence."

That is rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure—and I emphasize: the provisional rules of procedure. Unfortunately, these provisional rules of procedure have not envisaged or taken into account the possibility of the participation of a party not a Member of the United Nations, nor yet a member of the Secretariat or "other person". We are faced with a situation in which the PLO happens to be the main target of this latest savage act of terrorism. This is a body that also happens to have been granted an official status within the United Nations—namely,

the status of Permanent Observer, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Is that body to be invited to the Council to participate under a rule which considers only members of the Secretariat or individuals or other persons? We think not. Nor could it be invited under rule 37, obviously, because that applies only to the Members of the United Nations.

32. It has all along been said that the Council, or any other body, for that matter, is the master of its own rules of procedure. In this case, it is the duty of the Council then to decide on these rules of procedure, especially since the matter is not provided for in the provisional rules we have before us.

33. The one other case in which there was an analogy that might be considered a precedent was the invitation of Permanent Observers from the two Viet-Nameese States [1846th meeting]. Again, they were awarded the status of Permanent Observers; they could not be invited under any other rules of procedure. An invitation was extended to them to come and appear before the Council without reference to any rule of the provisional rules of procedure.

34. We have therefore decided, along with our colleagues from the non-aligned countries, to support the request made by the representative of Egypt to issue an invitation to the PLO to participate in the debate in the Council under no particular rule, and it is for the Council now to decide on this and to pronounce itself on this proposal.

35. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council is meeting today in order to discuss one of a long series of acts of aggression and international piracy, one of a long series of international acts of terrorism committed by Israel against a neighbouring State, Lebanon. And no contortions or attempts by the protectors of Israel to divert attention from this clear and plain fact by references to terrorism on the part of another party will be of any use in covering up this new international crime of Israel. The delegation of the USSR reserves the right to make a separate statement on the substance of the question under discussion. For the time being, it shall confine itself to stating its position on inviting the PLO to participate in this debate.

36. The Security Council at its informal meetings considered this matter in some detail. It was agreed that an invitation would be extended to the representatives of the PLO, but not under rule 39 or rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure. Rule 39 is inapplicable in this case. It provides for the Security Council to invite members of the Secretariat or other persons. In this case we are not dealing with members of the United Nations Secretariat or with any private individuals. We are dealing with the official observer of the PLO, which has been recognized

by the United Nations in its official documents and in decisions of the General Assembly as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Therefore, members of the Council, let us reject the legalistic casuistry that is being used here to conceal a deliberate attempt to prevent the representatives of the Palestinian people from taking part in the work of the Security Council in the discussion of a new act of international lawlessness by Israel.

37. It was agreed in the consultations that the invitation of official observers to a meeting of the Council was not provided for in the rules of procedure. The rules of procedure of the Security Council were drafted 30 years ago, and at that time the notion of official observers simply did not exist in the Organization. So obviously the drafters of the rules of procedure could not have been prophets; they could not have foreseen such a new institution at the United Nations.

38. Now there are official observers at the United Nations and the question arises as to how they are going to be given an opportunity to take part in the work of the Security Council when a question directly involving them is being discussed. A very important rule, a matter of principle, is involved in this point, that the Security Council has more than once applied in the past. What is the substance of that rule? It is that the Security Council is the master of its own procedures. That is why it has full authority to invite representatives of the PLO to take part in meetings of the Council, without invoking either rule 39 or rule 37. That is the line the Council took when inviting the official representatives of the two Viet-Nameese States to participate in the meetings when the question of the admission of those States to membership in the United Nations was under discussion, although for reasons known to us all that request for admission did not gain approval.

39. Therefore in this case, if there is a desire and the will on the part of the members of the Security Council to invite the representatives of the PLO, the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, and to give those representatives an opportunity to take part in the discussion of this question, this matter can be resolved entirely without casuistic references to the rules of procedure. When the official representatives of the two Viet-Nameese States were to be invited to meetings of the Council, no rules of procedure were invoked. A decision was made simply to invite them.

40. With regard to the question of the responsibility and the legitimacy of the PLO, one of the speakers has pointed out that some observers at the United Nations are legitimate, but the official observers from the PLO are supposedly not lawful. Of course this is entirely out of keeping with the truth. That argument is contrived. Let us refer to the facts instead. The General Assembly in resolution 3236 (XXIX)

has confirmed that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In a subsequent resolution adopted at this session of the General Assembly, resolution 3375 (XXX), the Assembly officially decided that the participation of the Palestinian people was essential in any efforts and deliberations aiming at the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The General Assembly in that resolution decided to invite the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of resolution 3236 (XXIX).

41. Moreover, at its twenty-ninth session, in resolution 3237 (XXIX), the Assembly accorded the PLO the status of Permanent Observer at the United Nations. What more legitimacy can one possibly require? A decision of the General Assembly lays down the law for the United Nations. The Assembly invited the PLO to participate in the sessions and the work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, in the capacity of observer. It emphasized that the PLO had the right to participate in the capacity of observer in the sessions and the work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of other organs of the United Nations.

42. The participation of the PLO in discussions by the Council of the new Israeli aggression against Lebanon is important and indispensable, because the Palestinian people, represented in the United Nations by the PLO, is not only an equal party in the Middle East conflict but, in this case, it is also the principal victim of aggression because the act of international piracy by Israel perpetrated not only in the territory of Lebanon but in areas where Palestinian refugee camps were situated. This was a dual crime committed by Israel: a violation of the integrity of territorial airspace and an unprovoked attack on a sovereign State; an attack which caused a great many casualties on the site of a camp of refugees who had been driven from their homes as a result of Israeli aggression. What more legitimate basis is required for the invitation of the lawful representatives of the Palestinian people?

43. The Soviet Union and its representatives in the Council firmly advocate the full participation of the representatives of the PLO in the forthcoming discussion in the Council of this new act of aggression committed by Israel. We most resolutely support the considerations and proposals advanced by the group of non-aligned countries in the Security Council to the effect that representatives of the PLO should be invited to participate fully in the debate in the Council on this question. Such an invitation would be fully in keeping with the resolutions of the General

Assembly and the resolution 381 (1975) of the Security Council.

44. I wish particularly to point out that when resolution 3210 (XXIX) of the Assembly, concerning the invitation of the PLO to participate in the Assembly on the question of Palestine, was adopted, 12 out of the total number of the current members of the Security Council voted in favour of the resolution. In that resolution the General Assembly:

“Considering that the Palestinian people is the principal party to the question of Palestine,

“Invites the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations... on the question of Palestine...”

45. Today the Security Council is discussing a question of direct concern to the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people have suffered as a result of a barbarous, unprovoked Israeli attack on Palestinian refugee camps. The Council cannot disregard the attitude of the General Assembly; if it did it would bring great discredit on itself as the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for ensuring international peace and security and taking decisive measures to curb aggression, no matter where it may occur or by whom it is committed.

46. It would be most unfortunate if those members of the Security Council which voted in the Assembly in favour of inviting the representatives of the Palestinian people, headed by their outstanding leader, Mr. Arafat, were to change their position in the Council today and put obstacles in the way of inviting the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, the PLO. That is the position in connexion with this question.

47. The delegation of the Soviet Union considers that to invite the representatives of the Palestinian people, the representatives of the PLO, to participate with official observer status in the consideration of this barbarous act of aggression against Lebanon and the Palestinian people, which is but one in a long series of such acts, is just, necessary and logical. No juridical casuistry can in any way justify opposition to the adoption of such a decision by the Council.

48. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): I intervene briefly in the interest of keeping the record straight with respect to some of the things which have been said here this afternoon.

49. First, the representative of Iraq asserted that the decision of the Security Council in September to hear the two Viet-Nams [*ibid.*] is a precedent for the proposal to invite what is called the “full participation” of the PLO. The Viet-Name case was entirely different. What the Council did in that

case was to invite the two Viet-Nams to make statements to the Council after the vote, not to participate fully.

50. Secondly, that invitation was extended on a “no-objection” basis. The President very properly paused, and, after a moment, said: “Hearing no objection, the motion is adopted”. There are objections in this case.

51. Thirdly, although the then President made no reference to any of the Council’s rules of procedure when the Council invited the two Viet-Nams—there was no reason for him to do so; we knew under what rule we acted—the fact is that the legal basis of the invitation was rule 39. As the representative of Italy has said today, there can be no other basis under the rules as they now stand.

52. Finally, in this regard, whether we believe there is one Viet-Name State or two Viet-Name States, there certainly is at least one such State, but there does not now exist any State of Palestine, nor does the PLO claim that there exists a State of Palestine. The PLO cannot therefore properly be treated as the Government of a State.

53. In conclusion, a number of references have been made here this afternoon to what was agreed or not agreed in the private consultations which the Council held prior to this formal meeting. I regret to say that the recollections of the United States delegation are very much at variance on a number of points with the recollections of other members of the Council. I regret this because it must surely be a sign that we have a faulty memory. I do not in any way mean to suggest that there has been misrepresentation, much less that there has been deliberate misrepresentation, but there is some distress on our part that our recollections and understanding should be so much at variance with those of other members of the Council. It must be a fact that if the practice which the Council has evolved of meeting in private and without a record being taken is to become the source of subsequent confusion or even disagreement, and conceivably even the quest for advantage in consequence of the absence of a record, then clearly the disposition of some members of the Council to continue that practice will be diminished and the use of a creative innovation in our procedures will perhaps commence to decline. I make that point in the most open and unaccusatory manner simply because it seems to me that it is not useful in this debate to make reference to earlier agreements which are not a matter of record.

54. Mr. TCHERNOUCHTENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Byelorussian SSR associates itself with the representatives of the non-aligned countries members of the Security Council that have proposed that the representatives of the PLO be invited to

take part in the work of the Security Council in the light of the fact that the PLO has observer status, and in accordance with the practice which the Council has applied in this case.

55. The objections that have been made to this are merely formalistic casuistry, nothing more, and it is quite impossible to agree with them. The General Assembly, in a number of its decisions, has emphasized the rights and the role of the PLO in the solution of the whole complex of questions relating to the Middle East problem. At the present time it is difficult to imagine that any question relating to the Middle East could be discussed or resolved without the participation of the representatives of the Arab people of Palestine represented by the PLO. After the adoption of a number of such decisions, with which members of the Council are familiar, one cannot fail to express regret at the position of those who, notwithstanding the opinions of the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations and the world community, continue to ignore the PLO.

56. As for the substance of this question, which has been referred to by other members in the Council, the aggressive acts of Israel were directed in Lebanon against the Arab people of Palestine and against a Palestinian refugee settlement. Why, in this situation, should one ignore the PLO, which is the only legitimately recognized organization of the Palestinian people? Who, in such a situation, is best placed to represent the interests of the Palestinian people? There can be no doubt, in the view of my delegation, that it is only the PLO and its representatives.

57. For these reasons, the Byelorussian SSR insists that the PLO and its representatives, should take part in the work of the Council from the very beginning of the discussion of the question before the Council. The Council will be doing its duty and taking a serious attitude towards the question under discussion if it invites the representatives of the PLO, in the light of that Organization's observer status.

58. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq): I apologize for taking the floor again this afternoon, but if I do so it is purely in the interest of keeping the record straight.

59. With regard to what was said just now by the representative of the United States, I should like to point out, first, that whether it is a State or a liberation movement which is invited to participate in the debates of the Council, is, in our view, immaterial. The invitation is now being issued to a Permanent Observer of the United Nations to participate in the Council's debate.

60. Secondly, the precedent was set in terms of participation, without reference to any rule of procedure. There is an analogy again between this invitation and the invitation that was extended to the

representatives of the two Viet-Nams, in that they were invited without reference to any particular rule of the rules of procedure.

61. Thirdly, I do not remember—though I too, perhaps, may have a faulty memory—having said that the observers from the two Viet-Nams were asked to participate fully in the deliberations and debate in the Council. If I am right—and the records would so show and will perhaps back me up on this—I said that the invitation was extended to them to participate in the debates of the Council.

62. Now, while I have the floor, I also seem to remember that the representative of the United States wanted to preclude the PLO's participation in this debate because, he said—if I remember correctly—that they have shown nothing but "disdain" and "contempt... for the work of the Council" [*para. 15, above*].

63. Now, the representative of the United States may be forgiven for not knowing who, in fact, has shown the greatest contempt and disdain for the Council—he is a newcomer—but I would advise him to read the records of the Council. He will find that it is the State of Israel, which he seeks to protect, that has shown the greatest contempt and disdain for the work of the Council and of the United Nations.

64. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): I have asked for the floor in order to clarify a point. I think one would have to be pretty daring, not having been present at the informal consultations of the Council, to interpret at one's discretion the discussion of the question at that meeting as the representative of the U.S. is now doing. Nor can we agree with the idea of separating official observers at the United Nations into first-class and second-class observers. There is no rule of procedure or any United Nations document one might mention that contains any such division.

65. One other point: I categorically affirm that in the case of the invitation of the official observers of the two Viet-Nameese States to take part in the work of the Security Council [*1846th meeting*], the President did not make any reference to rule 39, because there would have been no point in so doing: the official observers of the two Viet-Nameese States are official observers at the United Nations and not private individuals. And the then President of the Council, the representative of Mauritania—I am sorry that he is not here, because he could bear me out on this—did not invoke rule 39. So to try to ascribe to him something which he actually did not do is, to say the least, odd.

66. In preparing for today's meeting, I took the trouble to read the records of the Security Council, precisely that part of the records where the President's statement concerning the invitation to the official

observers of the two Viet-Nameese States was under discussion, and there was no reference at that point to rule 39. I thought that we should set the record straight on that. I think it is useful to do so.

67. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): I intervene, first, to assure my colleague from the Soviet Union that the United States' understanding of the record is exactly as is his own. We do not have any misunderstanding or disagreement. It would not, in any event, be of much avail, because there is in fact the record. It would perhaps be useful if I were simply to restate what I said on the occasion of commenting about the invitation to the two Viet-Nams. The third point I made a moment ago [*para. 51*, above] was:

“Thirdly, although the then President made no reference to any of the Council's rules of procedure when the Council invited the two Viet-Nams... The fact is that the legal basis of the invitation was rule 39. As the representative of Italy has said today, there can be no other basis under the rules as they now stand.”

That was the end of that passage, and that is all I wish to state.

68. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): In reply to the representative of the United States, that is your own interpretation, it is not the interpretation of the President. And as for what the President understood by that, it would be better to ask him than to misinterpret him.

69. Mr. KANE (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): I believe that we are embarking on an endless debate. The question you put, Mr. President, before the Security Council is quite clear. It would, however, appear that Mauritania is being quoted, especially by way of reference, during our debate today.

70. I shall now speak on behalf of Mauritania, even though the Permanent Representative of Mauritania is not here. To us, any representative of Mauritania represents Mauritania, regardless of whether or not he is the Permanent Representative.

71. Therefore, speaking on behalf of Mauritania, I wish to say that when Mr. El Hassen made his proposal to the Council [*ibid.*], he did so not as representative of Mauritania but as President of the Security Council. I believe the records of the Council are crystal-clear in this regard, and there is no need to ask the representative of Mauritania to give his own interpretation. The question he put to the Security Council was crystal-clear, as was the reply given to that question. I think we should avoid quoting the representative of Mauritania as such, and that we should rather speak of the President of the Security

Council, who asked the Council to reply to a question he put, a question to which he received a crystal-clear reply that appears in the records of the Council. I would ask delegations, therefore, to refer to the President of the Security Council, and not to the representative of Mauritania.

72. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): I have the happy opportunity to call to the attention of my colleague from Mauritania the fact that the form of the statement I made earlier to the Council and that I just a moment ago quoted was exactly the form which he quite understandably prefers. I said, and I shall say it once again:

“Thirdly, although the then President made no reference to any rule of the Council's rules of procedure when the Council invited the two Viet-Nams... The fact is that the legal basis of the invitation was rule 39. As the representative of Italy has said today, there can be no other basis under the rules as they now stand.”

73. Mr. KANE (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): I apologize for speaking again. I leave it to the representative of the United States to place whatever interpretation he deems fit to the statement that was made—I repeat—by the President of the Council when he made the proposal to the Council.

74. Now, Mr. President, as to the proposal you have made to the Security Council, it is quite clear, whether or not it is similar to, or identical with, the one made earlier by the representative of Mauritania when he presided over the Council. In any case, your question is quite clear, and each delegation is free to vote either in favour of, or against, that proposal. I do not, however, think it is necessary to go back to past sessions of the Council to find interpretations that fit into the position taken by either side.

75. The PRESIDENT: As there are no further speakers before the vote, I should like, as the representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, to make a short statement in explanation of my own vote.

76. I wish to explain why I intend to vote against the proposal that was put forward by the delegations of Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, the United Republic of Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania. That proposal contemplates conferring on the PLO a right to participate in the proceedings of the Council in this debate going far beyond what has customarily been accepted as appropriate in such a case. The granting to the PLO of this exceptional status in the Council's proceedings would, in the view of my Government, constitute an undesirable and an unnecessary departure from the established practice of the Security Council. The provisional rules of procedure of the Council provide only for Member States of the Organization to enjoy such treatment. We see no

sufficient reason to depart from that position. We certainly do not regard it as appropriate to accord such exceptional treatment to a body which is not merely not a Member State of the Organization, but which does not claim to be a State at all, nor to be the Government of a State. The PLO has been accorded a certain status by the General Assembly, but it does not, in our view, have the same status as those States which have been recognized as permanent observers to the Organization.

77. There is the further consideration, to which we attach considerable weight, that the essence of the complaint which is now before the Council is that of a complaint concerning the infringement of the territorial sovereignty of a Member State, Lebanon, which will itself be taking a full part in our proceedings. I should like to make it clear, however, that the way in which I cast my vote today on behalf of the United Kingdom is entirely without prejudice to the decision which the United Kingdom Government will take when the Council deals with the question of the participation of the PLO in the other debate which, as we recently agreed, will begin on 12 January 1976.

78. Now speaking in my capacity as PRESIDENT, in accordance with the procedures agreed upon during our consultation, we will proceed to a vote on the proposal put forward by the representative of Egypt in his letter, supported by the representatives of Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, the United Republic of Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania, that there should be accorded an invitation to the PLO to participate in this debate, and that that invitation will confer upon it the same rights of participation as are conferred when a Member State is invited to participate under rule 37.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Byelorussian Soviet, Socialist Republic, China, Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania.

Against: Costa Rica, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: France, Italy, Japan.

The proposal was adopted by 9 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.

79. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Costa Rica, who has asked to speak in explanation of vote after the vote.

80. Mr. SALAZAR (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation wishes to explain its negative vote on the proposal.

81. As stated by some of the members of the Security Council who supported the proposal, the invitation has been formulated so as to attribute to the PLO, rightly, in their view, the quality of sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Because we disagree with that qualification, my delegation did not support General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX). In my delegation's view, some kind of referendum should have been held before attributing the capacity of sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people to the PLO—a referendum which, for obvious reasons, it has not been possible to carry out. The fact that such a referendum has not been held makes it impossible for my delegation to support any procedure which, without the expressed will of the people, seeks to confer exclusive representation.

82. Although my delegation agrees that, in view of the subject to be considered by the Council on this occasion, it would be desirable to hear the Palestinian views, we do not share the opinion which justifies the presence of the PLO and qualifies it as the sole legitimate representative of that community.

83. Furthermore, my delegation holds the view that the framework for an invitation such as the one proposed is found in rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

84. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision just taken by the Security Council, I invite the representative of the PLO to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aql (Palestine Liberation Organization) took a seat at the Council table.

85. The PRESIDENT: The first speaker is the representative of Lebanon, on whom I now call.

86. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon): Mr. President, I should like to extend to you and to the members of the Security Council the appreciation of my delegation of the convening of this meeting at our request. I also wish to take this opportunity to convey to you, Sir, my compliments on your assumption of the presidency of the Council and to wish you every success in the fulfilment of your responsibilities in the service of international peace and security.

87. Before I proceed with my statement, I should like at the outset to make one point clear. My delegation is very happy with the decision just taken by the Council. This accords with our support of the Egyptian proposal, which I personally conveyed to you, Mr. President, yesterday. On that basis, my delegation agreed to postpone the discussion of the substance of this matter until today, pending the decision of the Council, which it has just taken, on the important question of the participation of the PLO in the discussion of the question before the Council.

88. Since the Council adopted resolution 347 (1974) on 24 April 1974 the Lebanese Government has refrained from coming before the Council to deal with the repeated attacks of Israel against Lebanon for two principal reasons: first, because of Israel's defiance of the Council's resolutions and the Council's reluctance to adopt measures that would deter Israel from repeating its attacks; and, secondly, because of our hopes that our behaviour would contribute to the peace efforts being undertaken to solve the Middle East problem.

89. However, Israel has persisted completely undeterred in its attacks against Lebanon. Since April 1974 we have sent numerous letters of complaint to the Council, warning it that unless it took effective measures to restrain Israel from further acts of aggression the cause of peace in the area and in the world would remain constantly endangered. So today we again come before the Council to bring to its attention the latest massive and outrageous air attacks against Lebanon, which cannot be ignored. The Lebanese Government, in its decision to bring this case before the Council, also considers that the Israeli attacks are of such gravity as seriously to threaten the cause of peace.

90. How ironical and hypocritical events in international life can be. Let me repeat to the Council some words that are still ringing in our ears: "We want peace; we have stretched out our hand in an offer of peace; we are prepared to move towards peace..."¹. Those words were pronounced by Mr. Herzog, the representative of Israel, to the General Assembly only two days ago, on 2 December, during the consideration of the situation in the Middle East. On that same day the arm of Israel was indeed outstretched. But it was the arm of a new aggression against Lebanon—against its sovereignty and territorial integrity, against its civilian population and against the Palestinian refugee camps located in our country.

91. The hypocrisy of Israel and its Janus-like image, which have already been exposed on several occasions, were once more revealed. Its actions contradicted and spoke louder than its words. For on that same morning of 2 December, between the hours of 10.05 a.m. and 10.30 a.m., (Beirut local time), units of the Israeli air force, composed of 30 planes, Phantoms and Skyhawks, simultaneously attacked three major Palestinian refugee camps in northern and southern Lebanon. Two jet formations penetrated Lebanon's air space, sweeping eastwards from over the sea. The attacking planes flew in at a low altitude, while the supporting and protective planes flew at a higher altitude.

92. One formation attacked the refugee camps of Nahr Al-Bared and Al-Badawi, situated near the northern Lebanese frontier, more than 200 kilometres from the Lebanese-Israeli border. The second forma-

tion attacked refugee camps situated in southern Lebanon at Nabatiyeh. As a result of these massive raids, many people were killed and others injured. Heavy destruction to property was also inflicted.

93. According to the latest official information, 8 Lebanese and 78 Palestinians were killed in northern Lebanon; 2 Lebanese and 106 Palestinians were injured. Four Lebanese homes were destroyed and 20 heavily damaged. In Nabatiyeh in the south, 4 Palestinians are known to have been killed, along with 12 Lebanese. Nine Lebanese and 11 Palestinians were injured. Four homes in the village of Kharbat Toul were destroyed, and many others damaged. Three motor vehicles were also destroyed. Many structures in the camps and in the vicinity were equally destroyed or damaged.

94. It has not yet been possible to determine the exact number of victims resulting from those attacks, because many bodies are still lying under the rubble. Some bombs scored direct hits on the shelters where people were taking cover and their bodies have not yet been recovered. Bombs weighing 250 kilograms each were dropped in the attacks, some of which were time-bombs. A large number of both the Lebanese and Palestinian victims were women and children.

95. Lebanon, as is well known, has gone through severe ordeals during the last several months. The Lebanese people and Government have been finding their way back to normalcy, working to restore law and order, to promote reconciliation, and to strengthen their national unity. It may seem strange that while Lebanon is healing its wounds and heading for stability, Israel should choose this very moment, in a premeditated manner, to attack many areas of the country with such severity and cold-bloodedness.

96. But when we remember Israel's established policy of provoking and perpetuating a constant state of turmoil in Lebanon, a policy that has been several times condemned by the Council, there can be no reason for wonder.

97. It may also appear strange that Israel should perpetrate this new act of aggression in the wake of the decision of the Security Council of 30 November, which renewed the mandate of UNDOF for another period of six months [*resolution 381 (1975)*]. But it is precisely because of this fact that Israel, believing that stability had once again been ensured on the Golan Heights, reverted to its cowardly tactics of attacking an exposed and defenceless country.

98. It is equally incongruous that those who profess peace should lack the political courage to face up to peace and should also lack the moral fortitude to accept the reality in international affairs. The majority of the Council members made an important declaration through the medium of the President [*1856th*

meeting, para. 23] last Sunday, according to which representatives of the PLO will participate in the debate of the Council scheduled to be held on 12 January 1976. This declaration has followed other resolutions which ensured widespread and growing recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and of their right to participate in all conferences and efforts affecting their future. The emergence of the Palestinian question in its true dimensions must have played havoc in Israel, made its leaders wild with anxiety, and led them to an unwarranted, unprovoked, and utterly insane act of political vengeance.

99. We do not know of any apparent reason for this attack. We do know that no action whatsoever has been undertaken by the Palestinians from Lebanon that could have been used as a pretext by Israel to justify its actions. Moreover, Israel itself has confirmed this fact and has stated that the aggression it undertook was not punitive but preventive in nature. This is a dangerous course to follow in international affairs. Are States to be allowed to determine on their own what should be termed preventive acts? If so, this will lead the world back to the law of the jungle, and far away from the international order based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

100. Lebanon has suffered from the wars and upheavals of the Middle East that originated in the creation of Israel and the concomitant eviction of the Palestinians from their homeland by Israel. As part of its policy in the area, Israel has initiated an era of violence directed against Lebanon with an air force commando attack on Beirut Airport on 28 December 1968. Since then, many attacks, raids and invasions of Lebanese territory, air space, and waters have been undertaken, acts which have led us to request that the Council take measures against Israel to deter it from either continuing or repeating such acts against Lebanon.

101. On several occasions, the Council condemned Israel and warned it not to repeat these attacks, but to no avail. None of the Council's resolutions has deterred Israel. Instead, Israel has demonstrated its contempt for the Council's decisions and for various other resolutions of the United Nations. Only the other day, we witnessed one such contemptuous act, unprecedented in the annals of the United Nations, when the Israeli representative stood on the rostrum of the General Assembly and tore to shreds the resolution which had just been passed. Moreover, the Council, the guardian of international peace and security, failed to enforce its own resolutions despite our many complaints and warnings.

102. The result of these attacks has been hundreds of people killed or wounded, hundreds of homes destroyed, scores of villages levelled, and the uprooting of thousands upon thousands of people from

southern Lebanon. These Lebanese refugees have been forced to abandon their homes and fields, their normal way of life, and their means of livelihood, and sought shelter in other areas of the country. This upheaval of our population overtaxed Lebanon's meagre resources and added new strains to its social and economic problems. If Israel is displeased with the Security Council's resolutions, with United Nations pronouncements, regarding the question of the Middle East, why should Lebanon be the victim of its vengeance and suffer from its aggression?

103. Since its creation, Israel has been a source of instability and violence in the Middle East. It has sought vindication through international sanction. War has been its main instrument. Brute military force has indeed been all it offered. On the other hand, Lebanon has always been a loyal Member of the United Nations, and its dedication to international peace has never been questioned. Unusual pressures have been forced upon my country, and the Lebanese people have suffered tremendously from problems not of their own making.

104. Instead of trying to solve the problems of the Middle East, Israel has deemed fit to fan its hatred against Lebanon. It would have had to face the problem of bombarding Lebanon and the Palestinian refugee camps therein, had it respected all United Nations resolutions that deal with the Middle East conflict and the Palestine question. The present malaise in Israel results from its isolation.

105. Recent United Nations resolutions have attempted to redress injuries inflicted upon the Palestinians. Israel cannot afford the luxury of picking and choosing only those United Nations resolutions which suit its interests. It has failed with its suspicious claims of offering the countries of the Middle East an outstretched hand of peace. It must make its claims credible.

106. Lebanon has always maintained and reaffirms now that the problem of the Palestinian people constitutes the core of the problem of the Middle East, and that no solution to this problem can be effective and durable unless the Palestinian people exercise its inalienable rights, already recognized by the United Nations and, chief among them, their right to self-determination and nationhood. This aspect of the Middle East problem has been sidetracked for many years. Even resolution 242 (1967) speaks only of the Palestinian refugee problem. The question is more than one of refugees for whom the international community should provide food, shelter and essential services. The question is the restoration to the Palestinians of their basic rights in order that they may live in dignity and build their own future in a national homeland of their own and on their national soil. The international community must face this question fairly and squarely and swiftly and find the proper solution for it at the same time

that it is seeking to find solutions to the other aspects of the Middle East problem. To leave this aspect unattended to is to invite the infliction of more tragedies on the peoples and countries of the Middle East, and to allow the situation to fester indefinitely.

107. Lebanon refuses to be an innocent victim in this tragedy. Lebanon demands that attacks against its sovereignty and territorial integrity cease. Lebanon urges the Security Council to stand by its obligations under the Charter.

108. The United Nations is supposed to protect the weak and small States from military bullies. It was not intended to protect the Powers, which can take care of their own defence.

109. Once again, we bring our case before the Council in the hope that the Council will rise to its task of maintaining international peace and security in the areas where they are most threatened and in the interest of those who, again, are most threatened. We should like to make our position clear on our objectives in coming to the Council. We hope that the Council will adopt the needed resolution which will strongly condemn the Government of Israel for its premeditated air attack against Lebanon, in violation of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions; that the Council will call upon Israel to desist forthwith from all military attacks against Lebanon; and that the Council will issue once more a solemn warning to Israel that, if such attacks are repeated, the Council will have to consider steps and measures to give effect to its decisions.

110. These are our demands of the Council; these are our minimum demands of the Council. If the Council in its wisdom wishes to go further, my delegation will be happy, but my delegation will accept no less than that.

111. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Egypt.

112. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt): Mr. President, may I be allowed to express my sincere appreciation to you for having called this emergency meeting of the Security Council at the request of Egypt and Lebanon, and also to thank the members of the Council for having acceded to our request. We trust that, under your wise presidency and with the constructive participation of the members, the debate in the Council will lead to positive and effective results, thereby contributing to the strengthening of peace and security in the region of the Middle East and ensuring greater respect for the Charter of the United Nations.

113. It is certainly not the first time that the Security Council has been seized of a question of Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the Palestinian people, as the record of the Council amply shows; but

significantly it is the first time that the victim of aggression—namely, the Palestinian people—has been given the chance to take part in its deliberations. Our deep thanks go to the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR, China, Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, the Soviet Union, Sweden, the United Republic of Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania. They have today, by their positive vote, inaugurated a new era based on justice and freedom.

114. If the defenceless Palestinian people in the refugee camps are continually subjected to barbaric and wanton Israeli air attacks, we believe that the least the Security Council should do is to give their representatives the chance to be heard; the more so, since General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 and resolution 381 (1975) of the Security Council are conceived in the same spirit.

115. It has always been Egypt's conviction that the PLO, as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, should be invited to take part in all deliberations in the United Nations related to the Middle East, since we consider them to be the principal party in that problem, on an equal footing with the other parties concerned.

116. The barbaric attack launched by the military air forces of Israel on 2 December 1975 is a flagrant violation of the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of Lebanon, and a vicious act of State terrorism against the Palestinian people.

117. Thirty Israeli military aircraft pounded the Palestinian refugee camps of Nabatiyeh, Nahr Al-Bared and Al-Badawi in northern and southern Lebanon for more than one hour. The tragic toll, according to the preliminary estimates, was 92 innocent civilians killed, including 12 children and 18 women. Also 160 innocent civilians were wounded, including 15 children and 30 women. Besides these human losses, schools, nurseries and civilian installations were completely demolished, among them buildings belonging to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the refugee camps.

118. One cannot but wonder what sort of victory over defenceless refugees the Israeli army claims; what preventive reprisals the Israeli Government is taking against civilians, women and children in their camps.

119. It has become an established pattern and practice that Israel resorts to a "show of strength" each time it fails to dictate its position to the international community and the United Nations. Only two days ago the Security Council published, the report of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization [S/11663/Add.18] on the Israel-Lebanon armistice line for the month of November 1975. From that report it is clear that Israeli forces con-

tinued to occupy daily, during daylight hours, five positions on the Lebanese side and that this was accompanied by numerous crossings into Lebanon by Israeli forces. This time Israel found no excuse but what the Israeli army spokesman had to say, namely:

“that Israeli planes bombed suspected guerilla bases in Lebanon as a warning to the Palestinians not to be encouraged by United Nations developments into staging further attacks on Israel.”

These wanton and barbaric Israeli acts of State terrorism demonstrate that Israel no longer bothers even to formulate pretexts for its aggression.

120. The Security Council, particularly the permanent members, and the world community cannot remain indifferent spectators while the Israeli forces carry out their acts of terror, murder and blackmail against a State Member of the United Nations and against defenceless women and children in refugee camps.

121. Israeli attacks against Lebanon constitute a campaign of intimidation and provocation which can only serve the revival of the cycle of violence in the Middle East. This latest example of the escalation of Israeli attacks on Lebanon is detrimental to the efforts which are being made to reach a peaceful and just settlement in the area, not to mention the fact that the Israeli attacks on Lebanon constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the Security Council and the principles of international law and morality. Israel must realize by now that its policy of aggression has been futile and self-defeating and will lead only to more violence. The only way to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East is through Israel's recognition of the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights and the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

122. The Israeli action against Lebanon will have serious repercussions on the entire structure of peace in the Middle East. By systematically violating Lebanon's sovereignty, Israel is inflicting irreparable damage on the fabric of peace in the area which has been attained, even though tentatively and gradually, as a result of most laborious and painstaking endeavours on the part of those who are dedicated to replacing hostility by peace, vindictiveness by justice and arrogance by the rule of law.

123. Members of the Security Council will not fail to discern the magnitude of the irresponsible behaviour of the Israeli Government which, unfortunately, indicates blatant aggressiveness and pathetic short-sightedness. Israel, instead of coming to grips with the basic elements of the conflict in the Middle East, instead of grasping the opportunity offered by the momentum which has built up recently in the area,

once again manifests its incompetence in heeding the many lessons which have been earnestly preached ever since October 1973.

124. The onus of lessening the chances of obtaining peace in the area will not fall upon a dispossessed, deprived, and a long-exiled Palestinian people. The blame must remain with the short-sighted, self-defeating, intimidating military machinery of Israel. The Palestinians, on whom Israel would like to put the blame, cannot forget the many untold injustices inflicted upon their people, property, land and towns and their sense of belonging. Israel must take the first steps towards peace. However, the situation before the Council today is a case of a premeditated and large-scale operation carried out by Israeli planes against a sovereign Member State, directed entirely against innocent civilians, Lebanese and Palestinian alike. As such, it cannot but be branded an act of aggression which essentially threatens the Middle Eastern and international peace and security and deserves absolute condemnation.

125. The Security Council, shouldering its responsibilities, has on many occasions condemned specific acts of aggression perpetrated by Israel against Lebanon. Yet it seems that the Israeli military establishment is still clinging to the method of the brutal use of force and threats against Lebanon, thus seriously damaging all chances of peace in the Middle East.

126. Egypt expects the Security Council, the organ responsible for international peace and security, to take effective and strong measures against Israel in order to stop Israel carrying out its barbaric acts of aggression and raids on Lebanon and the Palestinian camps.

127. In previous similar cases the Council clearly upheld the sanctity and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Further, the Council has repeatedly warned Israel against infringements of Lebanese territory. I need not recite the long list of resolutions starting with resolution 262 (1968) and resolution 280 (1970), and ending with resolution 347 (1974).

128. What we witness today in the Israel-Lebanon sector is but an abhorrent repetition of the short-sighted Israeli practices, in defiance of the authority of the Security Council. The community of nations has not yet forgotten the implications of previous Israeli acts of terrorism committed in violation of international law and in a challenge to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

129. In the long history of the customary Israeli violations of the principles and purposes of the Charter, some recent acts of State terrorism are still alive in one's memory. It is pertinent to ask who really introduced terrorism into the Middle East and who is practising terrorism as a governmental policy.

130. Egypt has time and again publicly warned Israel against attempting or committing aggression in any way against Lebanon and the Palestinians. That is because Egypt considers these acts as a direct aggression against it—I repeat: as a direct aggression against it—and against the entire Arab world. In fulfilment of that policy Egypt issued on 1 December yet another strong warning to Israel against any foreign interference or aggression against Lebanon.

131. As far back as April 1974 Egypt warned Israel against its blind policy of self-deception and self-delusion. On 15 April 1974 the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Ismail Fahmy, stated at this very table that

“It would amount to naiveté if one should anticipate the ushering of peace into the area while... annexationist designs are not abandoned.

“... If Israel has failed... to secure peaceful conditions around it, it is because Israel insisted on denying recognition and acknowledgement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians.” [1766th meeting, paras. 85 and 86.]

132. It is distressing that what we are witnessing today is but a reverse situation, contrary to all the expectations of every responsible and peace-loving country in the world. What we are witnessing today through the repeated aggressions against Lebanon is a malicious and repugnant policy conducive only to the negation of all the constructive initiatives carried out in the area as well as to the impediment of any further envisaged steps towards the ultimate materialization of peace and justice in the Middle East.

133. At the same time when Egypt puts these facts before the Council and the entire world community, it states that it now holds Israel completely responsible for any deterioration in the situation in the Middle East. Egypt considers that this aggression is in flagrant contradiction with the spirit on which the disengagement agreements on the Syrian and Egyptian fronts were concluded.

134. It is obvious that Israel, in this latest act of aggression, showed its hypocrisy and deceit by waiting until Syria had agreed to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and then committed its aggression immediately after the renewal. In view of that hypocritical policy, I repeat here that Egypt, holds the Israeli Government fully responsible for the consequences of this aggression.

135. It is for Israel to decide—wisely, I hope—its future course. One thing, however, is certain. Should Israel persist in applying its self-defeating and worn-out policies of the days before 6 October 1973, then that will surely have adverse consequences on the chances of peace in the Middle East. The respon-

sibility for escalating military operations remains with Israel, with all that entails for the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem.

136. Let me clearly repeat the following to the Government of Israel. The persistence of Israeli aggressions against Lebanon and the Palestinian people will have direct adverse consequences on the chances of achieving peace in the Middle East.

137. I should like to add, before the Council, that this escalation will, regrettably, have far-reaching consequences on the chances of peace in the area and on the prospects of a peaceful settlement. Israel, before anyone else, must choose between war and peace. If Israel chooses the latter, then it must stop forthwith all irresponsible actions, which, I repeat, will no doubt stifle all efforts to achieve a durable and just peace in the area.

138. I should like to end with a timely reminder and an urgent appeal. It is up to the Security Council to reverse the slide towards chaos and conflagration by living up to its responsibilities under the Charter. The Council, faced with Israel's official policy of State terrorism, wantonness and defiance, should call Israel to order and make sure that Israel desists forthwith from this policy of madness, a policy which can only lead to more violence and to the evaporation of all chances of peace.

139. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, on whom I now call.

140. Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic): I should like to begin my statement by extending a hearty welcome to the delegation of the PLO, that heroic organization struggling for the liberation of its usurped territory. With the participation of that delegation for the first time before the Security Council, the Council has at last followed a path which is in conformity with the path previously followed by the General Assembly and by many other international organizations—the right path because it gives to the legitimate representative of a heroic people the chance to participate in a matter of direct concern to that people. This action, coming after the historic resolution which was adopted by the Council a few days ago [*resolution 381 (1975)*] and which also recognized the right of the PLO to participate in the debate beginning on 12 January 1976 on the Middle East and the Palestine question, only confirms the decision and the understanding reflected in the statement by the President of the Security Council [*1856th meeting, para. 23*] concerning the participation of this directly concerned party.

141. Less than 48 hours after the Security Council has adopted the above-mentioned resolution extending the mandate of UNDOF, Israel once again sent its war planes in successive waves to bombard Palestinian

refugee camps in southern and northern Lebanon—to emphasize, as was reported by the Associated Press, quoting the declaration of an Israeli military source in Tel Aviv, that “Israel would meet the Palestinian guerrillas only on the battlefield”.

142. First reports indicate that more than 100 refugees, mostly children, women and elderly people, were killed and nearly 200 wounded as a result of that Israeli murderous act of aggression against the civilian population. Later reports unfortunately point to a much greater loss of human lives as well as to very extensive material damage, as was reported to the Security Council a moment ago by the representative of Lebanon.

143. This is not, of course, the first crime committed by Israel against the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon or other Arab countries. Israel has continuously followed a policy of terror and aggression right from the beginning of its tragic implantation in the region. But what is significant and rather horrifying is that the barbarous Israeli raids were committed this time not under the false pretext of retaliation or even the mask of preventive action against liberation fighters, but rather, according to the Israeli military source quoted above, as an answer to the unanimously adopted Security Council resolution 381 (1975), which invited the PLO to participate in the general debate on the Middle East and the Palestinian question beginning on 12 January 1976.

144. Thus, in answer to the mere call for a debate on the problem and to the obvious necessity that all parties concerned should participate in that debate, Israel carried out a large-scale aerial bombardment against Lebanon and against the Palestinian people in their camps, in those camps where the victims of previous Israeli aggressions are gathered, awaiting the restoration of their rights as human beings. Israel was not able to prevent the Council from inviting the Palestinians to come to the debate concerning their own fate, so it has decided to wipe them out, to continue the policy of systematic genocide against them. Unfortunately—for Israel, that is—the people of Palestine cannot be wiped out that easily, no matter how intensive the Zionist attacks against them may be. The people of Palestine is a fact and is a reality which goes back much further than the date of the conspiracy to establish a Zionist State in the region.

145. The crimes repeatedly committed by Israel against Lebanon under the false pretext of preventing future acts of resistance by the Palestinians are increasingly condemned by the majority of nations and by world public opinion. Everybody now realizes the true nature of Israel as an expansionist, aggressive entity, which is trying to conquer and dominate the region. Everybody is now convinced that the Zionists do not really want peace. What they want in reality is pure and simple annexation of the occupied Arab territories. They know that they cannot achieve the

expansionist dream of greater Israel as long as the Palestinian people exist. Their design, therefore, is simply to exterminate as many of those people as possible and to disperse those who remain all around the world.

146. The terrorist air attacks committed by Israel against Lebanon and the Palestinian people constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. As a matter of fact, after the end of the American aggression in South East Asia, with the victory of the Viet-Nameese and the Cambodian peoples, Israel is now the only régime which practises, systematically and as a declared policy, criminal and barbarous air, sea and land raids against other countries and territories. Furthermore, as is evident from the work and the discussions of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, Israel by far holds the record as the most condemned Member of the United Nations. Looking at its size, that may appear to be a very astonishing record. Nevertheless, the crimes and aggressions continuously committed by Israel are far out of proportion to its size and importance.

147. Israel is blocking the way towards a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, refusing to obey any resolution of the United Nations and persisting in its policy of expansion and settlement of the occupied Arab territories. It not only refuses to withdraw from those territories which it usurped by force and aggression, but it refuses as well to recognize the very existence of the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people is not only a reality, but, what is more, it is a reality recognized by everyone, it seems, except Israel. As a matter of fact, the existence of the Palestinian people and its right to have its own State was recognized in the very United Nations document which established the Israeli entity. For Israel to ignore that document would only mean that it rejects the United Nations document on which its own existence is based.

148. Israel has blocked all efforts for peace, claiming that it does not recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. What right has Israel to decide who represents the other parties? It is only the people of Palestine which is entitled to decide who is its representative. And here I can only comment on the words of a member of the Security Council who, in explaining his negative vote against the invitation of the PLO, said that this was because there had been no referendum as a result of which the PLO was chosen as the representative of the Palestinian people. I do not know whether that member of the Council is well acquainted with the fact that the PLO is the chosen representative of the Palestinian people outside and inside the occupied territories. It is by decision of all Arab countries, by all the countries of the Organization of African Unity and by a resolution of the General Assembly adopted by an

overwhelming majority. So let us leave it to the Palestinians to decide who represents them.

149. By evoking the issue of who represents the Palestinian people, Israel is hoping to postpone the moment of truth, the moment when its claim that it wants peace is to be put to the test. For it is the first to know that no real peace can be established in the Middle East without the participation of the Palestinian people, without recognition and attainment of its national rights and without total Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories.

150. Israel began its long record of defiance of United Nations resolutions and decisions by refusing to implement them. With time, the Zionist representatives began to take the floor as soon as such resolutions were adopted in order formally to declare their intention of not obeying them. Later on, that defiance took the form of coupling such declarations of non-obedience with the solemn tearing-up of the unwanted document on the rostrum.

151. Israel's response today is even more tragic. Israel's response to the resolution has been the bombardment and killing of those people the resolution sought to aid. We feel that at this rate of escalation the next response to any resolution criticizing or condemning Israel will be to bombard the Headquarters of the United Nations. There is a limit beyond which no Member of the Organization, whether great or small, can go without censure or punishment. Israel has long gone far beyond that limit.

152. The Security Council, as the main organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot let the Israeli war criminals persist in their policy of terror and aggression without punishment. Not only must the Council condemn the Israeli murderous and cowardly raids against innocent civilian men, women and children in Lebanon in the most severe terms; it should also issue a very serious and last—I repeat last—warning, making it plainly clear to this professional aggressor that, unless it puts an end to its criminal acts, the Council will impose on Israel the most severe sanctions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. If it is to deserve its name, the Council must take the necessary measures in order to stop Israeli aggression and to ensure the safety and security of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

153. The Council has already set the date of 12 January 1976 for the holding of a full debate on the problem of the Middle East and the Palestinian question. The PLO will participate in that debate, the aim of which is to ensure the establishment of a just and lasting peace on the basis of the implementation of all relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Israel has announced that it will boycott that debate because it is afraid of a real and just peace. The deliberate absence of the aggressor should

not, however, in any way diminish the sense of urgency concerning the necessity of establishing that just and lasting peace so long dreamed of, on the basis of the implementation of United Nations resolutions, including, of course, those relating to recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and those relating to total withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

154. Condemnation of this latest Israeli crime against Lebanon and the Palestinian people and a serious warning addressed to Israel to cease such acts of aggression are duties of the Council. The Israeli aggressors have committed their barbarous air attacks against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples as a sign of their rejection of resolution 381 (1975), and in order to block the debate decided upon in that resolution for 12 January with the participation of the PLO. Their cowardly crime only makes that debate more urgent, and the participation of the Palestinian people more essential.

155. The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

156. Mr. AQL (Palestine Liberation Organization): At the outset I should like, on behalf of the PLO, to express our deep appreciation to those members of the Security Council who have welcomed the participation of my delegation in the Council's debate. This is an historic moment in the struggle of the people of Palestine, since this is the first time their official voice has been heard by this august body. In point of fact, had it not been for the sad and tragic circumstances under which we are meeting, my delegation would have further elaborated on the significance of this step taken by the Council.

157. After the General Assembly had at its current session in resolution 3376 (XXX) reaffirmed resolution 3236 (XXIX) and even devised the means to implement that resolution, which has recognized the right of the people of Palestine to self-determination and national independence in its homeland; while the General Assembly was still debating the Middle East problem, which is the result of the Israeli occupation in 1967 of the remaining parts of Palestine, in addition to territories belonging to Egypt and Syria; while the deliberations of the Special Political Committee were still proceeding on Israel's practices in the occupied territories, already exposed and condemned by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories; when the Security Council has just resolved to debate the Middle East problem and the problem of Palestine on 12 January and the President of the Council had issued a statement to the effect that a delegation from the PLO would participate in the debate; while the people of Palestine had been making these political strides in its struggle and achieving political victories with increasing support from the international

community, to the isolation and frustration of Israel, a fact which was clearly pointed out as a headline in yesterday's edition of *The New York Times*—while all these major developments on the Palestine question were taking place within the United Nations in an effort to re-establish peace and security in the region. Israel, the war maniac of the Middle East, arrogantly refusing to understand the language of re-establishing the peace and order which it had so long disrupted in the Middle East, perpetrated in a typical racist Zionist manner a massacre of unprecedented magnitude against innocent Palestinians, made refugees twice in a lifetime, and against peaceful Lebanese villages.

158. According to Israeli officials, this cruel and ruthless massacre was neither an act of retaliation nor a punitive action. It was simply premeditated and preventive.

159. Let me briefly outline the details of this barbarous attack according to the report that my delegation has received.

160. The Israeli air force launched barbaric raids against Nahr Al-Bared and Al-Badawi Palestinian camps, north of Tripoli. The air raids, which lasted for 45 minutes, were carried out by three groups of Phantoms and Skyhawks, each group consisting of eight planes. The rockets used in the attack weighed 500, 2,000 and 3,650 pounds, and their length was 2.15 metres. They also employed round anti-personnel bombs of the type used in Viet-Nam, each of which contains 3,000 pellets. The enemy also used timed explosive bombs, intended to explode one hour after the attack. These bombs were, however, all dismantled by our forces. They also fired their machine-guns at civilians who tried to escape the bombs.

161. The enemy also launched another attack against the Nabatiyeh area, in the south of Lebanon, aiming at the Nabatiyeh camp primary school, Kharbat Toul, Duwair, Zo'Tar and Khar Tibnit. Other than the camp, there is no Palestinian presence in those Lebanese villages.

162. The air raid was carried out by three groups of planes, each group consisting of four planes. Casualties were as follows: in Nahr Al-Bared and Al-Badawi—57 dead, 42 of them women and children; 147 injured, 92 of whom were women and children. In Nabatiyeh, casualties were as follows: 17 dead, 11 of whom were women and children; 23 injured, 15 of whom were women and children. Most of the casualties in the Nabatiyeh area are Lebanese civilians.

163. Those barbaric attacks were executed by United States planes, rockets and bombs, and by pilots trained on United States military bases.

164. Those facts and figures speak for themselves. They need no further explanation or elaboration.

The Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, which for years have been subjected to savage Israeli attacks, will not bow and will not be shaken by Israel's policy of subjugation, even when a whole Lebanese village like Kharbat Toul is completely demolished and razed to the ground during the Israeli attack. The unity of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples is strong and becomes even stronger in the face of Israeli attacks.

165. For 28 years the people of Palestine have been living either in exile or under Israeli occupation, and their very existence is still being denied by the Zionist enemy. Their Palestinian homeland is now totally under Israeli occupation. From Herzl to Weizmann and from Ben Gurion to Rabin, including of course Dayan and Menahim Begin, we have had a bitter experience with that racist Zionist movement.

166. Racist Zionism began the implementation of its programme in Palestine by causing a demographic upheaval whereby the major part of Palestine was occupied by force of arms, while the majority of the indigenous population was dispossessed and uprooted at the point of the Zionist bayonet. Having achieved that stage, Zionism turned to the next, which aimed at the extinction of the people of Palestine as a political community. The name Palestine had to be obliterated. The existence of the people of Palestine had to be denied. The Arab character of occupied Palestinian territory had to be systematically destroyed. Further Israeli settlements had to be established. Arab Palestinians under Israeli occupation had to be demoralized by land and property confiscation, mass arrests, eviction of the local inhabitants and obstruction of the intellectual development of the youth. United Nations resolutions acknowledging our inalienable right to self-determination had to be flouted and trespassed, while the repeated condemnation of Israel by the United Nations had to be neglected and decried.

167. Having failed to achieve the political extinction of the people of Palestine, Zionism has embarked upon our physical destruction and elimination. We will not succumb to Israeli Zionist policies and designs, brutal and ruthless as they are. Zionism, recently condemned by the General Assembly as a form of racism and racial discrimination, is an ideology which is at best mediaeval and at worst primitive. It is regressive and anti-historical, and the proof is no further than the Arab Palestinian response to Zionist challenges.

168. In our exile and dispersion, we have created the PLO, which is now hailed and recognized by the international community as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. In our despair and destitution, we have asserted a fighting will which will relentlessly confront the enemy until our inalienable rights are recognized and implemented. From our grievances and the injustices inflicted upon

us, we have developed a just cause which advocates as an ultimate goal a solution based on inclusion rather than exclusion, on integration rather than racial purity, and tolerance rather than a religious ghetto. For the liberation of our people under Israeli occupation, our National Palestine Council has endorsed a national liberation programme which aims, among other things, at the establishment of a national and sovereign Palestinian authority on any liberated part of Palestine.

169. That is the answer of the people of Palestine to Zionist challenges confronting it. The PLO, under the leadership of Chairman Yasser Arafat, will continue to intensify its armed struggle with the support of all freedom-loving, anti-apartheid, anti-Zionist peoples until we exercise our right to self-determination and national independence in our Palestinian homeland.

170. However, as I come to end of my statement, I should not neglect to address my concluding words to the representative of the United States—although he chose not to listen to the Palestinian answer to his vituperations. We were neither saddened nor

surprised by his vehement and rather vociferous attack on the people of Palestine. The antagonistic attitude of the Government of the United States towards the Palestinians and their national aspirations is chronic and almost incurable. We have become used to this antagonistic American attitude and we can live with it. What he said is reminiscent of the cold-war language, and he must be an old cold-war warrior. May I remind him that he is fighting the wrong war, behind the wrong lines. He is fighting the homeless Palestinian victims of his Israeli allies who are fighting us with his Government's sophisticated planes, missiles and rockets. Nevertheless, I would like to assure him that the so-called terrorists of today will be tomorrow the rulers, with their Jewish brothers, of liberated Palestine—a Palestine for both Arabs and Jews, free of ethnic or religious discrimination, a Palestine free of racist Zionism.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.

Notes

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2423rd meeting.*